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FROM: BERLIN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 557, OCTOBER 23, 8 PM

PRIORITY

ACTION DEPARTMENT 557, INFORMATION BONN 508, LONDON 334,
MOSCOW 314, PARIS 348, SHAPE 228, USAREUR 329.

PARIS ALSO FOR USRO AND MCGUIRE

USAREUR FOR POLAD

SHAPE FOR STOESSER AND US ELEMENT LIVE OAK

FIRST BLOSH BERLIN REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S CUBA STATEMENT
APPEARS BE FULL SUPPORT IN WEST BERLIN AND PLAYING DOWN IN
EAST BERLIN.

SEVERAL LEADING OFFICIALS OF WEST BERLIN GOVT AND BOTH POLITICAL
PARTIES WITH WHOM MISSION OFFICERS TALKED TODAY WELCOMED US
MOVES AND REMAINED GENERALLY CALM AND CONFIDENT DESPITE AWARE-
NESS DEVELOPMENTS COULD BRING ABOUT EXACERBATION IN BERLIN
SITUATION. SAID NO EVIDENCE UNUSUAL ANXIETY, BUT RATHER WIDE-
SPREAD ENTHUSIASM THAT US HAS SEIZED INITIATIVE IN EAST-WEST
CONFLICT AND DEMONSTRATED COURAGE AND DETERMINATION. THREE
WEST BERLIN LABOR LEADERS ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENDORSED PRESIDENT'S
ACTION IN CONVERSATION WITH US MISSION OFFICER. SAID THIS
EXACTLY WAY TO HANDLE COMMUNISTS; RUSSIANS ALWAYS BACK DOWN
BEFORE RESOLUTE ACTION. APPRECIATED PRESIDENT'S POINTED
REFERENCE BERLIN. ONLY ONE IN PASSING MENTIONED POSSIBLE
DANGERS. IN ADDITION, RANDOM COMMENTS OTHER WEST BERLINERS
INDICATED WIDESPREAD POPULAR APPROVAL US INITIATIVE THIS
INSTANCE. REACTION DESCRIBED TO US BY CORRESPONDENTS HERE AS

TYPICAL

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AE- 557, OCTOBER 23, 8 PM, FROM: BERLIN

TYPICAL IS ENCOURAGEMENT THAT US HAS FINALLY TAKEN VIGOROUS AND POSITIVE ACTION AGAINST COMMUNISTS. SOME POPULAR EXPECTATION REPERCUSSION FOR BERLIN, BUT THIS POSSIBILITY APPARENTLY BEING ACCEPTED CALMLY BY PUBLIC.

WEST BERLIN AFTERNOON PAPERS FRONT PAGED PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AND HEARTILY ENDORSED IT IN EDITORIAL COMMENT. SAID US GOVT HAD NO CHOICE BUT RESPOND TO COMMUNIST CHALLENGE IN CARIBBEAN, AND WAS ACTING IN SELF-DEFENSE. DER ABEND (IND) SAID SOVS HAVE AGAIN BEEN GIVEN UNMISTAKABLE EVIDENCE US NOT DISPOSED ACCEPT CONTINUAL THREATS TO PEACE IN CUBA OR ELSEWHERE, INCLUDING BERLIN. KURIER (PRO-COU) SAID PRESIDENT'S MENTION BERLIN AND ANNOUNCEMENT US FORCES THROUGHOUT WORLD ON ALERT ESPECIALLY WELCOME REASSURANCE. COMMENTED NEXT DAYS WOULD BRING TEST OF NERVES, BUT BERLINERS KNOW WESTERN STRENGTH BEST GUARANTEE OF PEACE.

WE WERE TOLD BY WEST GERMAN CORRESPONDENT THAT NEUES DEUTSCHLAND EDITOR AND, SEPARATELY, INFORMATION MINISTRY OFFICIAL EAST BERLIN PRIVATELY DENIED TO HIM SOVIET MISSILE EMPLACEMENTS CUBA. MAINTAINED SOVIETS WOULD NEVER LAY SELVES OPEN FOR CRITICISM BY SUCH OBVIOUS ACTIVITIES IN CUBA. ARGUED PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS PRIOR US ELECTIONS. APPEARED VIEW REPERCUSSIONS CALMLY. IN CONVERSATION AT SPANDAU LUNCH AT WHICH MISSION OFFICERS AND SOVIET EMBASSY AND MILITARY OFFICERS PRESENTED SOVIETS ON OWN INITIATIVE RAISED SUBJECT IN RELAXED MANNER AND TOOK POSITION PROPOSED SHIP SEARCH ILLEGAL AND US ACTION HAD DOMESTIC POLITICAL MOTIVATION. SOVIET EMBASSY THIRD SECRETARY APPEARED SURPRISED WHEN TOLD PRESIDENT HAD NOT ANNOUNCED FULL BLOCKADE. SAID PROPOSED SEARCH OF SOVIET SHIPS COULD BE VERY DANGEROUS AND ASKED IF THERE NO OTHER WAY SOLVE PROBLEM.

EAST GERMAN WIRE SERVICE CASTIGATED AGGRESSIVE U.S. MEASURES WHICH IT DESCRIBED AS COMPLETE SEA BLOCKADE. CONTRASTED PEACEFUL INTENTIONS CUBA. STRESSED GRATIFICATION FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND GOVMAYOR BRANDT WITH U.S. MEASURE. NEUES DEUTSCHLAND REFERRED ILLEGALITY OF ANNOUNCED "EVEN MORE RIGOROUS BLOCKADE," BUT CITED "ALLEGED PURPOSE HINDER TRANSPORT OFFENSIVE

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OFFENSIVE WEAPONS."

COMMENT: NOTABLY WEST AS WELL AS EAST MEDIA AND INDIVIDUALS
CALL US ACTION "BLOCKADE." DISTINCTION BETWEEN THIS AND
"AMERICAN QUARANTINE ON SHIPMENTS OFFENSIVE WEAPONS TO CUBA"
APPARENTLY WILL REQUIRE CONTINUING PUBLIC INFORMATION EFFORT.
ALSO, RELEASE CONVINCING PHOTOGRAPHS OF SOVIET MISSILE
EMPLACEMENTS CUBA, IF FEASIBLE, WOULD BE USEFUL HERE JUDGING
FROM SOME SCATTERED SKEPTICISM.

LIGHTNER

DMJ

NOTE: Advance copies to BTF and SS 10-23-62 CWO-M

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